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REVIEWS.

Louis P. Betz,¹ *Studien zur vergleichenden Litteraturgeschichte der neueren Zeit*. Frankfurt a. M., Rütter & Loening. 1902. 264 pp.

The attractive volume by the author of *La Littérature Comparée* (Strassburg, 1900) will be of interest to all students of comparative literature, especially in America. Mr. Betz, who was born in New York and is well acquainted with American life, has much to say about the influence of American authors upon European literature. The volume is dedicated to the memory of Karl Hauselt, the German-American philanthropist in New York. It is well written, though at times not free from affectation, and illustrates the fact, familiar to students of modern German literature, that German scholars no longer disregard form, as was so common fifteen and twenty years ago.

In the introduction Betz calls attention to the establishment of chairs of Comparative Literature at French universities and of departments of Comparative Literature at American universities (Columbia and Harvard). Germany, which has always eagerly followed the development of foreign literatures, has as yet no professorship of Comparative Literature. In justice to Germany, Betz should have mentioned that German scholars published a journal of Comparative Literature some time before chairs in this subject were established in France or America.

¹Professor Betz's sudden death at Zurich is a great loss to the science of Comparative Literature, of which he was one of the ablest representatives. As a German-American with a broad knowledge of German and American literatures, he was especially qualified to act as mediator between the intellectual classes of the two countries. The studies reviewed here give ample evidence of that. His business experience in New York may have developed in him that commonsense view of things which is so characteristic of his work. Professor Betz started on his scholarly career rather late in life, but within the space of a few years he published several very substantial contributions to comparative literature, and yet greater things were to be expected of him.—J. A. W.

Betz sees the beginning of the comparative study of literature in the celebrated *Querelle des Anciens et des Modernes* of the seventeenth century. He does not allow the claim of Jos. Texte that Germany is the home of this study, though he admits that the full significance of the method was first brought out in Germany by men like Lessing, Herder, Tieck and the two Schlegels. Later, however, he calls Herder the father of the comparative study of literature in the modern sense. The author then points out the fallacy of the common belief that the comparative study of literature is the result of increasing literary cosmopolitanism. In France and Germany the method was applied during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries by the advocates of national literature. After mentioning briefly some of the scholars that have been most eminent in this field, the author states the problems of Comparative Literature: 1st, the comparative study of folk-lore; 2nd, the influence of Classical upon modern literature; 3rd, the study of sources and subjects, including the migration of literary types and motives from nation to nation and their modification according to time and place; 4th, the inter-relation of modern literatures including comparative poetics and the influence of translations; 5th, the synthetic presentation of literary epochs.

The first essay, *Edgar Poe in der französischen Litteratur*, discusses Edgar Allan Poe's influence upon French literature. It is in many respects the most interesting study in the series. By way of introduction the author gives a brief sketch of American literature during the nineteenth century. Emerson, Hawthorne, Poe and Walt Whitman are the men who gave to their country literary independence and repaid a large part of America's literary debt to Europe. Poe is for Betz the greatest representative of American letters, greater than Emerson and Walt Whitman. He combines all the typical phases of American life; his moods reflect the contrast between the inner life of the American and the outside world: on the outside the struggle for money and power, but within the idealism 'of the most sentimental, enthusiastic and naive human being.' Like Schönbach, the Austrian professor at Graz, Betz tries to impress upon the German public the intellectual achievements of the American people. (Cf. his appreciative essays in the *Literarische Echo*, 1902-3.)

Poe, abhorred and neglected by his countrymen, became the idol

of the French symbolists and *décadence* poets, as such second only to Richard Wagner. It was Charles Baudelaire, the author of *Fleurs du mal*, who made himself the apostle of Poe in France, though he was not the first Frenchman to 'discover' Poe. Betz very justly looks upon the *décadence* movement as essentially a self-assertion of the individual against the mass, a reaction against naturalism and materialism, and Poe, himself a protest against the materialism around him, was the very artist to attract and inspire the *décadence* poets. Betz does not fail, however, to point out the difference, 'great as a yawning abyss,' between Poe and his French admirers: Poe's terrible imagination was as 'pure as an angel,' it has not a trace of sensuality. Poe is the forerunner not only of the symbolistic and occultistic 'atmospheric' novel, but also of the metaphysical novel—the *roman scientifique*—and the detective story.

The second essay deals with Gérard de Nerval, the author of the most important French translation of *Faust*, the literary *commis voyageur* between Paris and Munich. Gautier tells the story that Goethe, after reading Nerval's translation of *Faust*, wrote a letter to him containing the phrase: 'Je ne me suis jamais si bien compris qu'en vous lisant.' Other French writers enlarged upon Gautier's account and no one questioned Goethe's correspondence with Nerval. Betz shows that Gautier's story is without any foundation and that Goethe's letter to Nerval is probably an invention of J. Janin.

The subjects of the third and seventh essays are the German-Swiss writers, Heinrich Leuthold and Gottfried Keller. Leuthold is represented as the unrivalled translator of French poetry, the poet of artistic form. The essay on Gottfried Keller is disappointing. It was written for the feuilleton of a Zurich paper and, in its present form, did not deserve a place in the collection. Its serious part is a review of F. Baldensperger's French work on Gottfried Keller.

In the fourth essay Betz discusses Émile Montégut, the versatile and scholarly contributor to the *Revue des deux Mondes*, the interpreter of foreign literature. He takes up Montégut's translations from the English and German and his critical essays. Though Betz purposely omits Montégut's publications on sociological, moral and historical subjects, we are impressed with the stupendous activity of this man who, at the time of his death, was almost forgotten in France. Montégut's complete translation of Shakespeare with introduction and commentary is the most important contribution to

Shakespeare literature in a country so uncongenial to Shakespearian art. Montégut's interest in German literature is chiefly due to a conversation with Heine in 1855, when the latter was approaching death. His essay on Heine, published many years later (*Revue des deux Mondes*, 1884), is one of the most brilliant studies of Heine. Montégut was one of the few Frenchmen who, in these latter days, did not allow chauvinism to blind him as regards German literature, but had the courage to continue the work of Madame de Staël.

The fifth essay deals with J. J. Bodmer and his relation to French literature. The essay first appeared in the Bodmer memorial volume (Zurich, 1900) and was generally recognized as a valuable contribution to our knowledge of Bodmer and his critical theories. Betz attacks the traditional view of Bodmer as the advocate of English literature in Germany and shows that Bodmer throughout his life was influenced by French literary ideals. But in spite of Betz's strong arguments, the traditional view is the correct one. What distinguishes Bodmer from his contemporaries is not his French training but the fact that, in spite of his French training, he recognized the value of English poetry for the development of German literature. That has given Bodmer so important a place in the history of German criticism (cf. Sulzer-Gebing in Koch's *Studien zur vergleichenden Litteraturgeschichte*, II, p. 113), that is Bodmer's claim to distinction even in the eyes of eighteenth century critics. Herder in the first collection of his *Fragmente* (edition of 1768, II, 6) praises Bodmer because he called attention to British poetry.

The sixth essay, entitled *Benjamin Constant's 'Adolphe,'* gives an account of Constant's relation to Madame de Staël, which he portrayed in his novel 'Adolphe.' Betz points out the connecting links between 'Adolphe' and Goethe's 'Werther.'

The eighth essay shows the influence of German Switzerland upon the life and poetry of Victor Scheffel, the author of the ever fresh 'Ekkehard.' It is not a study in comparative literature, but might well be called a study in comparative German literature, as it shows the mutual influence of German-speaking countries. As in the essays on Leuthold and Keller, we are impressed with the important position Switzerland holds in modern German literature.

The ninth essay takes up Heine and his influence upon foreign literatures. Betz, who has written a searching monograph on Heine in France, is an authority on this subject. While the Germans are

still quarreling about the merits of Heine, foreign countries, especially France and England, have long since recognized him as the greatest modern German poet. Betz discusses the French, English, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Slavic and Scandinavian translations. The best and most complete English translation of Heine's works is by an American, the lamented Charles G. Leland. The most important agents, however, in spreading Heine's poetry throughout the world were the great German composers who vied with one another in setting Heine's poems to music.

The concluding chapter takes up a few general questions of comparative literature. The author sketches the development of the literary hegemony of different nations from the Middle Ages down to the end of the nineteenth century, but does not touch upon the most interesting question: what factors, social, political or economic, rendered such a literary hegemony possible? The subject cannot be satisfactorily treated in a short essay. In modern times the author believes it is impossible for any one literature to exercise as dominant an influence upon the world as French literature did during the seventeenth century. No one will seriously question this statement, as long as present political and economic conditions prevail. It is perfectly conceivable, however, that such a literary hegemony may take place again as the result of political and economic changes.—The second part of the essay shows the cosmopolitan character of modern French and German literatures. In both countries, however, a reaction has set in which seeks inspiration at home among the people.

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Rudolf Haym: *Gesammelte Aufsätze*. Besorgt von Wilhelm Schrader. Berlin, Weidmannsche Buchhandlung, 1903. v + 628 Pg. 12m.

Contents: Ulrich von Hutten, 1858; Schiller an seinem hundertjährigen Jubiläum, 1859; Ernst Moritz Arndt, 1860; Varnhagen von Ense, 1863; Arthur Schopenhauer, 1864; Die Dilthey'sche Biographie Schleiermachers, 1870; Ein deutsches Frauenleben aus der Zeit unserer Litteraturblüthe, 1870;